

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAN JO 01269 312116Z

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9755

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 1269

EXDIS/STADIS //////////////////////////////////

FROM AMBASSADOR

REF: STATE 067568

1. SINCE THERE ARE PRECEDENTS FOR U.S. ATTORNEY INTERVIEWS WITH HIGH-LEVEL FOREIGN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, DESPITE THE DELICACY OF AN APPROACH TO FOREIGN MINISTER FACIO AS OPPOSED TO PREVIOUS ONES TO PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS, I CONCUR THAT THE INVITATION BE EXTENDED TO FACIO IF IT WILL HELP BUILD THE EXTRADITION CASE AGAINST VESCO. AGREE THAT LETTER SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO FACIO AT HIS LAW OFFICE IN SAN JOSE.

2. ONCE DECISION IS MADE TO TAKE THIS STEP, IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT FACIO UNDERSTAND CLEARLY THAT THIS REPRESENTS SERIOUS AND TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT EFFORT TO BUILD SOLID EXTRADITION CASE AGAINST VESCO. MOST CONVINCING WAY OF DOING THIS WOULD BE TO HAVE PARTICIPATION BY DEPARTMENT OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE IN INTERVIEW. SUCH PARTICIPATION ALSO CRITICAL IN VIEW OF POTENTIAL IMPACT THIS COULD HAVE ON OUR RELATIONS WITH COSTA RICA.

3. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT FACIO IS COMPLETELY AWARE OF THE TESTIMONY OF INOCENTE ALVAREZ, FOURNIER AND OREAMUNO, THE LATTER TWO BEING MEMBERS OF FACIO'S LAW FIRM. PRESIDENT ODUBER AND FIGURESE ARE PROBABLY ALSO FULLY INFORMED AND, MOREOVER, UNDOUBTEDLY GAVE THEIR PERMISSION FOR THOSE WITNESSES TO TESTIFY. IF THE U.S. ATTORNEY INDICATED TO ANY OF THE WITNESSES HIS INTENTION TO INVITE
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 SAN JO 01269 312116Z

FACIO, WE MAY BE SURE THAT HE KNOWS ABOUT IT.

4. FACIO MAY BE ENCOURAGED TO ACCEPT THE INVITATION IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT NO PUBLICITY ACCOMPANIED THE PREVIOUS WITNESSES' APPEARANCES. ALTHOUGH THE PRESENCE OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER WILL BE MORE DIFFICULT TO HIDE I BELIEVE IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT WE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ASSURE HIM THAT HIS INTERVIEW AND POSSIBLE GRAND JURY APPEARANCE WILL BE HANDLED WITH ABSOLUTE DISCRETION.

5. FACIO IS CURRENTLY IN ROMANIA ON AN OFFICIAL VISIT AFTER WHICH HE WILL SPEND A WEEK ATTENDING THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE IN GENEVA. HE IS EXPECTED BACK IN SAN JOSE IN MID-APRIL. U.S. ATTORNEY MAY BE ABLE TO TAKE OCCASION OF HIS OAS TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON IN EARLY MAY TO HOLD MEETING WITH HIM.

6. I BELIEVE IT EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT I BE AUTHORIZED TO ADVISE FACIO IN ADVANCE ONCE THE LETTER OF INVITATION IS PREPARED.
TODMMAN

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